

I claim:

1. An online interactive system for facilitating collaboration between a presenter and a plurality of participants, comprising:

5 a presenter graphical user interface comprising:

a comment text box within which presenter generated comments are displayed;

a question text box within which participant generated questions are displayed;

10 an answer text box within which presenter generated answers responsive to the participant generated questions are displayed;

an audience text box within which a list identifying each of the plurality of participants is displayed;

means for authorizing a selected participant to pose a question;

15 means for posting the presenter generated comments for display in the comments text box;

means for posting the presenter generated answers for display in the answer text box;

20 means for entering text to be transmitted to the plurality of participants and to be displayed on the participant graphical user interface;

a plurality of participant graphical user interfaces each comprising:

means for requesting authorization to pose a question; and

means for generating a question to the presenter when authorized;

25 a comment text box within which presenter generated comments are displayed;

a question text box within which the participant generated questions are displayed;

an answer text box within which the presenter generated answers responsive to the participant generated questions are displayed; and

30 a system server for facilitating communication between the presenter graphical user interface and the plurality of participant graphical user interfaces.

2. The online interactive system recited in claim 1 wherein:

the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

a whisper text box within which presenter and participant private

5 messages are displayed; and

means for selecting a participant from the audience text box for private communication of the private messages displayed in the whisper text box; and

the plurality of participant graphical user interfaces each further comprising:

a whisper text box within which presenter and participant private

10 messages are displayed.

3. The online interactive system recited in claim 1, wherein the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

means for polling the plurality of recipients.

4. The online interactive system recited in claim 1, wherein the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

means for breaking the plurality of participants into sub-groups.

5. The online interactive system recited in claim 1, the system server further comprising:

means for converting an application specific format file to a universal image format file; and

means for transmitting the converted image file to the presenter graphical user interface and the plurality of participant graphical user interfaces;

the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

a presenter presentation window for displaying the converted image file;

and

means for controlling the presentation of the converted image file; and

the plurality of participant graphical user interfaces each further comprising:

a participant presentation window for displaying the converted image file.

6. The online interactive system recited in claim 5, wherein the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

means for annotating the converted image file as displayed on the participant presentation window.

7. The online interactive system recited in claim 5, wherein the application specific format file is a PowerPoint file.

8. The online interactive system recited in claim 5, wherein the universal image format file is a JPEG file.

9. The online interactive system recited in claim 5, further comprising:  
means for allowing the presenter to grant one of the plurality of participants control of the presentation of the converted file.

10. A graphical user interface for facilitating collaboration between a presenter and a plurality of participants, comprising:

a comment text box within which presenter generated comments are displayed;

a question text box within which participant generated questions are displayed;

an answer text box within which presenter generated answers responsive to the participant generated questions are displayed;

an audience text box within which a list identifying each of the plurality of participants is displayed;

means for authorizing a selected participant to pose a question;

means for posting the presenter generated comments for display in the comments text box;

means for posting the presenter generated answers for display in the answer text box;

means for authorizing a selected participant to pose a question; and  
means for entering text to be transmitted to the plurality of participants and  
to be displayed on the participant graphical user interface.

5 11. The graphical user interface recited in claim 10 further comprising:  
means for polling the plurality of recipients.

12. The graphical user interface recited in claim 10 further comprising:  
a whisper text box within which presenter and participant private  
10 messages are displayed; and  
means for selecting a participant from the audience text box for private  
communication of the private messages displayed in the whisper text box.

13. The graphical user interface recited in claim 10 further comprising:  
15 means for breaking the plurality of participants into sub-groups.

14. The graphical user interface recited in claim 10, further comprising:  
a presenter presentation window for displaying a slide show presentation;  
and  
20 means for controlling the display of the slide show presentation on a  
participant presentation window located on participant computers.

15. The graphical user interface recited in claim 14 further comprising:  
means for annotating the slide show presentation as displayed on the  
25 participant presentation window.

16. The graphical user interface recited in claim 14, further comprising:  
means on the participant presentation window for requesting control of the  
slide show presentation; and  
30 means on the presenter presentation window for authorizing control of the  
slide show presentation to a participant requesting control.

17. The graphical user interface recited in claim 14, wherein the slide show presentation is a PowerPoint file converted to a JPEG file format.

18. The graphical user interface recited in claim 14, further comprising:  
means for allowing the presenter to grant one of the plurality of participants control of the slide show presentation.

19. An online interactive system for facilitating collaboration between a presenter and a plurality of participants, comprising:

a system server for facilitating communication the presenter and the plurality of participants comprising:

means for converting an application specific format file to a universal image format file; and

means for transmitting the converted image file to the presenter graphical user interface and the plurality of participant graphical user interfaces;

a presenter graphical user interface comprising:

a presenter presentation window for displaying the converted image file;

and

means for controlling the presentation of the converted image file; and  
a plurality of participant graphical user interfaces comprising:

a participant presentation window for displaying the converted image file;

wherein the system server causes the means for controlling on the presenter graphical user interface to control the converted image file displayed on the participant presentation window.

20. The online interactive system recited in claim 19, wherein the presenter graphical user interface further comprising:

means for annotating the converted image file as displayed on the participant presentation window.

21. The online interactive system recited in claim 19, wherein the application specific format file is a PowerPoint file.

5 22. The online interactive system recited in claim 19, wherein the universal image format file is a JPEG file.

23. The online interactive system recited in claim 19, further comprising:  
means for allowing the presenter to grant one of the plurality of participants control of the presentation of the converted file.

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